

## North Carolina

### North Carolina End-of-Course Exams

(Competency Tests and Test of Computer Skills Were Eliminated)

#### Part I: Policy Trends

##### Type of test

North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments are standards-based and required for students taking the following courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Civics & Economics, English I, Physical Science, and U.S. History. Students entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time in 2006-07 and beyond must meet the high school exit standards (scoring proficient) regarding EOC assessments for all of the above except Algebra II and Physical Science. However, effective October 7, 2010, the State Board of Education (SBE) eliminated the high school exit standards effective 2010-11 school year.

##### Purpose

The North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments were developed for two purposes:

- To provide accurate measurement of individual student knowledge and skills specified in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* and
- To provide accurate measurement of the knowledge and skills attained by groups of students for school, school system, and state accountability.

End-of-course tests are based on the assessment of higher level skills within the context of specific subject-area content. When properly administered and interpreted, these test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- Students to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others,
- Parents to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market,
- Teachers to know if their students have mastered subject area knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed,
- Community leaders and lawmakers to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students around the state, and
- Citizens to objectively assess their return on investment in the public schools.

<b>Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2007-08 school year or any pending changes</b>	<p>See <a href="http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/briefs/opereocassessmentbrief2005.pdf">http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/briefs/opereocassessmentbrief2005.pdf</a> for more information.</p> <p>To comply with Senate Bill 202/S.L. 2009-451, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) eliminated, effective July 1, 2009, the Competency Tests in Reading and Mathematics and the Computer Skills Tests and their alternate assessments. In addition, House Bill 1864/S.L. 2010-33 eliminated the requirement for students to complete a high school graduation project as a state requirement for graduation. In addition, the SBE eliminated the high school exit standards effective with the 2010-11 school year. See <a href="http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/news/2010-11/20101007-02">http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/news/2010-11/20101007-02</a>.</p>
<b>Status of the state's decision regarding the Common Core State Standards and impact of that decision on exit exam policies</b>	<p>The state has adopted the Common Core State Standards in both English language arts and math.</p> <p>New EOC assessments are being developed to align with the Common Core State Standards in Reading and Mathematics and the state's new Essential Standards in the other content areas. The new assessments are scheduled to be first administered in the 2012-13 school year.</p>
<b>Test used by colleges or universities for undergraduate admission?</b>	No
<b>Year first administered</b>	<p>Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2006-07 who are following the college/university preparation, college/technical preparation, and career preparation courses of study will be held to new exit standards, which include passing five end-of-course assessments.</p> <p>Students following the occupational course of study are not required to meet the high school exit standards. They are required to meet other rigorous standards for graduation. For more specific information visit <a href="http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/graduation">http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/graduation</a></p>
<b>Year diplomas first withheld</b>	2009-10 (for new exit standards), but eliminated in 2010-11.

<b>Subjects tested</b>	Students entering 9 <sup>th</sup> grade in 2006-07 are required to pass end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, English I, U.S. history, civics and economics, and biology to meet the new exit standards. However, the exit standards were eliminated in 2010-11 school year.
<b>Types of questions</b>	The end-of-course assessments include all multiple-choice items.
<b>Grade first administered</b>	End-of-course assessments depend on when students take the respective courses.
<b>Grade(s) exam aligned to</b>	End-of-course assessments are course-specific.
<b>Number of retakes allowed before end of grade 12</b>	NA
<b>Retakes after grade 12</b>	NA
<b>Does the state have reciprocity with other states?</b>	NA
<b>Exit exam used for No Child Left Behind?</b>	NA
<b>Same cut score for graduation and NCLB?</b>	NA
<b>Has the state considered changing the cut score needed to pass the exit exam for graduation?</b>	NA
<b>Evaluations of state exit exam</b>	NA
<b>State test contractor</b>	The state has a contract with North Carolina State University to provide assistance with the development of the end-of-course assessments.
<b>Does the state provide students with alternate paths to graduation?</b>	Yes.
<b>Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners</b>	No.
<b>Alternate paths to graduation</b>	Yes. Students with disabilities who are following the

<b>specifically for students with disabilities</b>	occupational course of study (OCS) are not required to meet the same standards as non-OCS students to receive a diploma. Only certain students with disabilities may participate in OCS, as determined by each student’s IEP team.
<b>Who makes decisions on whether a student is eligible to use alternate paths?</b>	IEP teams make decisions about students eligible for the occupational course of study.
<b>How are students identified as eligible for alternate paths to graduate?</b>	This is handled through the IEP process. School principals are required to determine which students have met graduation requirements. There is no appeals process after the decision of the principal.
<b>When calculating the graduation rate for adequate yearly progress (AYP) purposes, does the state count students taking alternate paths together with graduates who passed the high school exit exams?</b>	The students who complete the OCS receive the same diploma (not a modified one) as those students completing the requirements for the college/university course of study. Therefore, students meeting the OCS graduation requirements are included in the four-year cohort graduation rate if they graduated in four years.
<b>How many full-time equivalent staff in the state department of education are involved in implementing alternate paths?</b>	.5
<b>Types of assistance the state provides for all districts to raise <i>initial</i> pass rates for all students on the high school exit exam</b>	NA
<b>Types of assistance or remediation the state provides for all districts to help students who have failed to pass the exit exam</b>	The state does <i>not</i> provide assistance or remediation to all districts to help students who have failed in their initial attempt to pass the assessments. School districts are required to provide assistance and remediation to help students who failed in their initial attempt.
<b>Does the state provide funding for remediation?</b>	Yes. The existing funding resources are used to provide remediation, including regular average daily membership; summer school, dropout prevention, Title I, low-wealth funds, and small districts.

**Are districts mandated by law to provide remediation?** Yes. According to state board of education policy HSP-N-000, the school district shall provide focused intervention to all students not demonstrating standards of proficiency.

**Are students required to participate in remediation?** No.

**Part II: Student Performance**

**Initial pass rates, 2008-09**

<b>Percentage of Students Passing by the End of the 2008-09 school year</b>					
<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>English I</b>	<b>U.S. History</b>	<b>Civics and Economics</b>	<b>Biology</b>
All students	68%	74%	71%	71%	71%
White	79%	84%	80%	82%	82%
African American	49%	58%	53%	53%	52%
Latino	61%	61%	68%	61%	62%
Asian	84%	82%	82%	80%	84%
Native American	59%	61%	65%	59%	62%
English language learners	54%	44%	56%	46%	51%
Students with disabilities	40%	38%	48%	43%	49%
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	55%	60%	57%	56%	57%
<b>Passing score (scale of 0-800)</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>147</b>

Note: Data provided by the state department of education.

**Denominator used when calculating these rates:** Number of students with valid test scores from all students taking the EOC assessments in the respective courses See <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2010/disag/>

**Initial pass rates, 2009-10**

<b>Percentage of Students Passing by the End of the 2009-10 school year</b>					
<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>English I</b>	<b>U.S. History</b>	<b>Civics and Economics</b>	<b>Biology</b>
All students	78%	82%	82%	79%	81%
White	86%	91%	88%	88%	90%
African American	63%	71%	68%	64%	67%
Latino	73%	71%	78%	68%	74%
Asian	90%	84%	88%	84%	90%
Native American	69%	69%	74%	65%	73%
English language learners	61%	52%	57%	43%	53%
Students with disabilities	52%	50%	60%	51%	61%

Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	68%	72%	71%	67%	71%
<b>Passing score (scale of 0-800)</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>147</b>

Note: Data retrieved from <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2010/disag/>

**Denominator used when calculating these rates:** Number of students with valid test scores from all students taking the EOC assessments in the respective courses See <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2010/disag/>

State Graduation Rates		
Student Group	2008-09	2009-10
All students	72%	74%
White	78%	80%
African American	63%	67%
Latino	59%	61%
Asian	84%	85%
Native American	60%	68%
English language learners	52%	48%
Migrant	NA	NA
Students with disabilities	57%	58%
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	62%	66%

Note: Data retrieved from <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/docs/> (scroll down to Cohort Graduation Rates and select appropriate year)

**Current state graduation rate calculation formula for AYP purposes**

North Carolina uses the Adjusted Cohort Rate.